**Action ABC's: Learning Vocabulary With Verbs**

**Main content area:** Vocabulary, writing

**Learning Outcomes:** Students willgain or review knowledge of parts of speech by defining what verbs are. They will access and expand their existing vocabulary by listing verbs for each letter of the alphabet and apply their vocabulary and knowledge of parts of speech by using verbs in sentences that they then illustrate.

**Developmental level:**  Kindergarten through 2nd grade

**Materials:** Computers with Internet access and printing capability

Bookmaking materials

Dictionaries and thesauri

Pencils, markers, and crayons

**Procedure:**

Tell students they are going to play a game where they will act out words you say. Some words you might use include: Jump, Sit, Twirl, Sing, Clap, Yawn

Encourage students to further the game by contributing words of their own.

Tell students that the words that they just acted out are called verbs. Ask them if they know what a verb is, working toward the following definition: A part of speech that usually describes an action.

Explain that they will be creating an Action Alphabet book (either a class book, group books, or individual books, depending on what you have decided)

Each page of the book or books will contain a letter of the alphabet, a verb that starts with that letter, and a sentence using that verb. Let the students know that they will be learning some new vocabulary words that will assist them when they read and write.

Ask students to brainstorm verbs for the different letters of the alphabet. Write the words on the board next to the corresponding letters. As it becomes obvious that some letters have few or no verbs next to them, explain that some letters (like x, k, and z) have a smaller number of verbs beginning with them.

Ask students if they have any questions about the assignment. When they are ready, have them get into their groups and give each group a copy of the Alphabet Brainstorming Worksheet. If you are using dictionaries and thesauri, review how to use them, noting in particular where it indicates each entry's part of speech.

Students should spend about 20 minutes creating a list of verbs for each letter of the alphabet (you may want to assign certain letters to each group to make sure all of the letters are covered). While students are working, circulate among groups answering questions and providing support as needed.

At the end of the small-group work, bring the class back together into a large group and add the words they came up with to the list on the board. If possible, leave the list of verbs on the board; if not, copy them onto chart paper.

**Assessment Measures:** Observation and discussion. Assess book that each student makes.

**Source of Strategy:** readwritethink.org

**Book Buddy Biographies: Intermediate and Primary Students Working Together**

**Main content area:** cooperating with others

**Learning Outcomes:**

Students will participate in a brainstorming sessions, developing a personalized list of questions, engage in an interview session using a planning sheet, write, illustrate and edit a biography for their book buddies, present personalized biography to their book buddies and strengthen computer/writing skills by communicating with their buddies using e-mailing.

**Developmental level:** Kindergarten through 2nd grade

**Materials:** General Classroom Materials (paper, pencils, markers, crayons, and clipboards), Copy of the Class List, cut up and placed in a container, Computer Lab, or access to computers

**Procedure:**

Generate a list of possible questions (or use the sample provided) to help guide instruction during the brainstorming session.

Explain the Book Buddy process. Buddies will meet once a week throughout the school year, as well as communicate via e-mail, and the first activity will be completing a project to become acquainted with each other.

With the class, brainstorm a list of possible questions that they can ask their Book Buddies to get to know them better.

Record responses on the board. Keep discussion going by providing examples when needed.

After brainstorming questions, intermediate students copy at least ten questions to make their interview survey, and the primary students' teacher prepares an interview sheet using questions from the board.

**Assessment Measures:**

Observation

**Source of Strategies:** readwritethink.org

**Collaborative Stories**

**Main Content Areas:** Pre-writing, drafting

**Learning outcomes:** Students will participate in a discussion about beginnings of stories, work in small groups to write an interesting beginning to a story and establish possible story ideas for later use, demonstrate reading comprehension and inferential skills by "adding on" to a collaborative story and use descriptive language and supporting details in the writing process.

**Developmental level:** kindergarten through 2nd grade

**Materials:** Children’s books with interesting beginnings and general classroom supplies (chart paper, assorted colored markers, crayons)

**Procedure:** Gather students together. Review story elements with students by referring to and recalling any favorite books which have been recently read aloud. Have students discuss interesting characters, different settings, conflict/resolution examples, and story endings of several different stories.

After discussion, inform students that they are going to be doing a project that begins with working in groups at the computer to develop some possible ideas for a story that the class will write together. Let them know that they will be talking about ideas for characters, conflicts, resolutions, and settings.

Gather students at a computer or use an LCD projector to show them how to use the Story Map interactive to generate story ideas. Have student groups work collaboratively with the tool. As students work, circulate among groups to ask questions about their ideas, to help them expand any details, and to lend any technical assistance needed. They will need to print out their work for later reference.

When all groups are finished, have each group share their story ideas with the rest of the class. For each group, elicit feedback from the whole class by asking three questions:

What do you like best about this story idea? Do you have any questions about the idea? Do you have any suggestions for this group?

Allow groups to make revisions of their story maps after discussion.

**Assessment measures:**

Teacher observation and anecdotal notes based on class discussion of story elements should be the prime assessment for this activity. Teachers may choose to comment on or create mini lessons based on the quality of student writing, regarding conventional uses of language and/or regarding creativity and content.

**Source of Strategy:** readwritethink.org